

REMARKS

Claims 1-25 remain in this application. Reconsideration of the application is requested.

Each of independent claims 1 and 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e), along with certain dependent claims, as being anticipated by U.S. Patent application publication 2004/0151958 to Formanski et al. Reconsideration is requested. Each of the independent claims mentioned now requires a heat exchanger disposed between an expander and a burner that transfers at least a portion of thermal residual energy remaining in hot gases, after flowing through the expander, to a fuel flow supplied for combustion. Neither of the Formanski et al. fuel cell system embodiments noted by the Examiner in the rejection meets these limitations. The fuel cell system represented in Figure 7 of the Formanski et al. publication includes heat exchangers 24, 52, and 72, as well as an anode exhaust gas burner or combustor 122 downstream of an expander 102. Nothing, however, suggests the presence of a heat exchanger between the combustor 122 and the expander 102. The fuel cell system represented in the other drawing figure mentioned in the rejection by the Examiner, Figure 10, includes additional heat exchangers 152 and 156 in a coolant loop 154, but does not include a combustor or, therefore, a heat exchanger between such a combustor and the expander 102. Again, neither of the Formanski et al. fuel cell system embodiments noted by the Examiner in the rejection meets the limitations discussed, and the rejection of claims 1 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is now inapplicable.

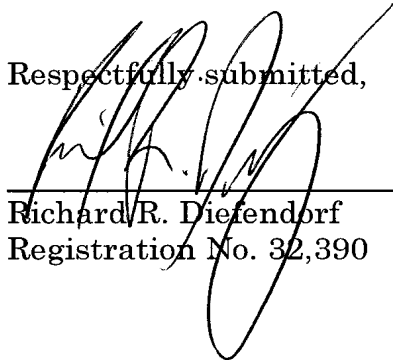
U.S. Patent application publication 2003/0182944 to Hoffman et al., U.S. Patent 5,722,241 to Huber, and U.S. Patent application publication 2003/0035988 to Graage are relied on in combination with the Formanski et al. disclosure in various rejections of dependent claims set forth in sections 5-7 on pages 4-6 of the Office Action. None of these secondary documents, however, suggests modifying either of the Formanski et al. fuel cell system embodiments discussed by the Examiner so that it meets the limitations now appearing in claims 1 and 14. It is respectfully submitted, therefore, that each of claims 1 and 14 above is patentable. The rest of the claims in this application are dependent claims and are considered patentable as well.

This application should now be in allowable condition for reasons discussed above. If there are any questions regarding this Reply or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an extension of time sufficient to effect a timely response. Please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #095309.53149US).

Respectfully submitted,

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